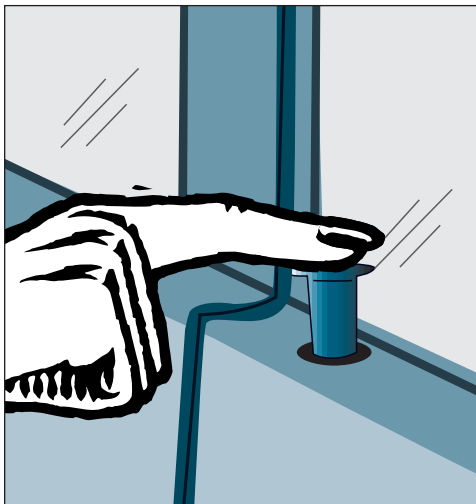


Take extra precautions for your safety to ensure that you stay away from risky situations.



Fall back into security

by Victoria Anderson

Fall brings fewer hours of daylight. Your safety can be jeopardized in parking lots, isolated public areas and even your driveway. Some people might take advantage of the darkness to rob or assault you. Take extra precautions for your safety to ensure that you stay away from risky situations.

- ✓ Avoid walking on dark streets alone after dark.
- ✓ Identify and avoid any risky places such as back stairways, alleyways, bushes and dark parking lots.
- ✓ Don't take shortcuts through vacant lots or unpopulated areas.
- ✓ Always have your key ready as you approach your car or home. Have it out and ready to turn. Do not "fish" in your purse or pockets at the car or at your front door—it makes you vulnerable to attack.
- ✓ Always look around, under and to the rear of your vehicle before unlocking it.
- ✓ Always lock your doors while driving, and keep the windows up.
- ✓ If your car breaks down, pull over to the side of the road and turn your car's emergency flashers on. Stay in the car with your doors locked and windows

rolled up. Use a cellular phone to call for help. Don't rely on passers-by to help. If someone stops and offers help, roll down the window just enough to ask them to call the auto club or police if you have not been able to contact someone for help.

- ✓ When approaching your home, and you notice something amiss like a door ajar, the back fence gate open or something else, do not enter. Go to a neighbor's, call the police—get assistance.
- ✓ With shorter days and changeable weather, be extra careful of your surroundings when in your vehicle.
- ✓ Turn on your headlights as soon as ambient light decreases. Headlights increase your ability to be seen by other drivers.
- ✓ Do some preventive maintenance on your car in preparation for the winter months. Check your windshield wipers and replace them if they do not make a clean sweep of your windshield. The summer's heat cracks the rubber, making them ineffective. Make sure your car has been checked under the hood and is ready for the months ahead—oil change, filters, air cleaner, anti-freeze, windshield washer fluids and belts. Check your tires and make sure your spare is inflated and usable.

(Note: Anderson is a safety technician in SN.)